

Current Volunteers**Castolon**

Terry Brackeen—Camphost (2nd)
 Phil & Margaret Hodgins—Camphost (4th)
 Paul & Judy Tarr—Visitor Center (1st)
 Lee Tarvin—Visitor Center (1st)
 Steve & Tina Ehrman—Backcountry (7th)

Chisos Basin

Linda Jarvie—Camphost (1st)
 Kenn & Linda Sutton—Camphosts (7th)
 Phil & Peggy Spruell—Visitor Center (1st)
 Ann Wildermuth—Visitor Center (1st)
 Barney Ghim & Paula Jamps—Backcountry (6th)

Panther Junction

Elaine & John Jonker—River Rangers (6th)
 Tim Iverson (SCA)
 Nick Mosesso— (SCA)
 Genna Mason—SCA (ScRM)
 Walt Lemonovich —Maintenance (2nd)
 John & Delona Roth— ScRM (1st)

Persimmon Gap

Mark Kirtley—Visitor Center (17th)
 Jim & Marlene Hufford—Visitor Center (3rd)

Rio Grande Village

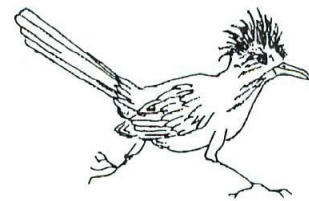
Mike & Nancy Coe—Backcountry (4th)
 Steve Blythe—Backcountry (1st)
 Jane Shepard—Camphost (1st)
 Amy Gibson—Camphost (1st)
 Daisy Welch—Backcountry (2nd)
 Gary Karasick—Visitor Center (1st)
 Earl & Joy McFarland—Visitor Center (1st)

Resident and remote volunteers

Reine Wonite— Park Videographer (11th)
 Stacy Sirotnak—ScRM
 Jim Bishop—BBNHA
 Sara Hall—ScRM

* Number in () indicates years of service

Spring Break: Blame it on the Greeks and Romans



It's that time of year again: the birds are beginning to return to snowbound northern cities, the first buds of spring are sprouting on trees and hordes of college students are descending on the beaches of Mexico, the Caribbean and the southern U.S., turning them into twisted cesspools of sunburn, margaritas and wet T shirt contests. Ah, spring break. Big Bend National Park is not exempt from this onslaught.

Blame the debauchery on those hedonistic ancient Greeks and Romans. The arrival of spring, the season of fertility and awakening, was historically celebrated in tandem with the veneration of Dionysus or Bacchus — the Greek and Roman gods of wine. More immediate responsibility, however, lies with a swimming coach at Colgate University, Sam Ingram, who brought his team down to Fort Lauderdale in 1936 to train at the Casino Pool — the first Olympic-size swimming pool in Florida. In 1938, sensing a marketing opportunity, the city hosted the first College Coaches' Swim Forum at the Casino Pool; according to one source, by 1938 more than 300 swimmers were competing at the event, and a bacchanal was born. The tradition of college swimmers traipsing to Florida in droves continued well into the swinging 60s. *Time Magazine* first highlighted spring break in an April 1959 article titled "Beer & the Beach" ("It's not that we drink so much," noted one attendee, "it's that we drink all the time."). Two years later came the release of the spring break-themed hit movie *Where the Boys Are* starring a young, preternaturally tan George Hamilton. The Fort Lauderdale-set film spread the tale of collegiate men and women voyaging to the halcyon shores of Florida to find fun, sun — and maybe even true love — far and wide.

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(Spring Break— continued from page one)

By the free-loving '70s, Fort Lauderdale's fun and sun had become decidedly raunchier. With gratuitous PDA (public demonstration of affection, for the uninitiated) and "balcony-diving" — negotiating one's way from balcony to balcony to get to other floors or rooms, a practice typically performed in a drunken stupor and thus madly dangerous — the norm, many communities began questioning why the heck they had invited such unruly houseguests in the first place. By 1985, some 370,000 students were descending on Fort Lauderdale (or fondly, "Fort Liquordale") annually — prompting yet another exploitative film, *Spring Break*, starring Tom Cruise and Shelley Long. But by the end of the '80s, the town had enough: stricter laws against public drinking were enacted and Mayor Robert Dressler went so far as to go on ABC's *Good Morning America* to tell students they were no longer welcome. As a result, spring breakers were pushed even farther south, and to destinations outside the U.S. where the sun was hotter and drinking ages lower. *

Somewhere along the way, Big Bend National Park became a part of the Spring Break scene. The National Park Traveler magazine ran an article in 2010 entitled "Traveler's Tips for a Spring Break Visit to Big Bend National Park". Author Jim Burnett feels that Big Bend is do-able at Spring Break but you need to get an early start to get a parking place at the most popular trailheads. Also making a motel or campsite reservation is imperative. Mr. Burnett writes, "'Crowded' is clearly a very relative term, but compared to places like Yosemite Valley or the South Rim of the Grand Canyon in peak season, we found Big Bend in March to be a pleasure. The key for a successful spring trip to this outstanding park is found in one word: 'early.'"

I'm sure that many of you have a "spring break story," as I do. I came to Big Bend NP during Spring Break in 1986, rather by accident with a 2 year old and 4 year old in tow. Naturally all the campgrounds were full. At that time, "overflow camping" was permitted along the road between Rio Grande Village Store and the picnic area at Daniels' Ranch, so we joined the melee there. The second morning of our visit, I went to the RGV campground bathroom at 6 am and hung around, chatting with the other campers. One lady said that they were heading out that day and I casually inquired about claiming their campsite upon their departure, thereby obtaining a "real campsite" at RGV during Spring Break.

A big change has taken place in recent years with the college set and their spring break activities. The idea of the Alternative Spring Break arrived on the scene about 10 years ago. Alternative trips include everything from tutoring migrant farm workers in Florida to registering voters in rural Mississippi. Unbelievably, there is an organization called Break Away that trains and helps colleges across the United States promote alternative break programs. 65,000 college students participated in its 2009 programs. You can check out their website at www.breakaway.org. Here at Big Bend NP, we get requests for Alternative Spring Break groups, but due to campground space and staff limitations (people to supervise groups), we have had to curtail volunteer groups during the month of March. However, every year there are more requests for Alternative Winter Breaks in January. - compiled by Jane Brown

**A Brief History of Spring Break by Lauren Bohn (Time Magazine, 3/30/09)*

***"Traveler's Tips for a Spring Break Visit to Big Bend National Park by Jim Burnett (National Park Traveler, 3/2010)*

New Faces—New Places

Lee Tarvin is joining us this spring at the Castolon Visitor Center. He comes from Fishers, Indiana, and his wife gave him permission to come out and volunteer on his own, as she has not yet retired. He has volunteered previously at Mt. Rogers National Recreation Area in Marion, Virginia, and Black Bayou Lake National Wildlife Refuge in northeast Louisiana.



Paul and Judy Tarr, current volunteers at the Castolon Visitor Center, have visited Big Bend previously and were recruited by Ron Payne (you have to watch out for him!). Also, for those of you who remember Ted and Maryanne Rowan (previous Castolon VC volunteers), Paul taught at the same high school as Ted in West Falmouth, Massachusetts. Judy spent most of her working career as a public health nurse in Massachusetts.

Phil and Peggy Spruell are holding down the fort at the Chisos Basin Visitor Center and come to us from Hillsboro, Texas, where they recently relocated. Phil is merrily retired from a long career as a CPA and will be having a big party on April 15th to celebrate only having to prepare his taxes this year! Peggy's career has been in medical technology, and she is also a Texas Master Naturalist. In anticipation of their retirement, the Phil and Peggy volunteered at Lake Houston Park performing trail maintenance and working as nature center hosts. I will always remember the Spruells as the volunteer couple who came to see me in 2010 saying that they were planning on retiring in October 2012 and wanted to volunteer beginning Feb. 1, 2013. Of course, I couldn't guarantee a volunteer spot, but they definitely make a plan and it worked! They cast their wishes to the universe and voila!



Earl and Joy McFarland can be found at the Rio Grande Village Visitor Center this spring. They come from Las Cruces, New Mexico, and have volunteered at Garrison Dam National Fish Hatchery on Lake Sacajawea in North Dakota. They have visited Big Bend six times and have hiked many of the trails and explored many historical locations in the park. Avid birders, they were headed to the lower Rio Grande Valley this spring until we waylaid them here at Big Bend. I am sure that their knowledge of the avian world will be much appreciated at the RGV Visitor Center! Earl and Joy are retired teachers.

We want to welcome **Jane Shepard** who is camphosting at Rio Grande Village this spring. She was most recently volunteering at St. Andrews State Park at Panama City Beach, Florida. Her last two summers have been spent as camphost at Avalanche Campground in Glacier National Park, where her services were much appreciated. She is a watercolor artist and would like to host watercolor workshops here in the park if the opportunity presents itself.



Amy Gibson is also camphosting at Rio Grande Village this spring, coming to us from Illinois. Amy spent her working career as a Safety Manager ...her email is "safetyamy". She volunteered this past year at the Balloon Discovery Center in Albuquerque for a few weeks and worked last summer at the Wilderness Access Center (Aramark) in Denali National Park. After she leaves Big Bend in April, she will be making her way to Gila Cliff Dwelling National Monument in New Mexico for another volunteer stint.

Linda Jarvie joins us for the first time as camphost at Chisos Basin campground, as Ed Davis prepares to depart. She comes to us from Ypsilanti, Michigan, where she worked in the construction industry as a pipe-fitter, later migrating into construction management. This is her first park service volunteer experience although she has visited 36 of the national parks and is a huge fan. Linda is an avid hiker, camper and birdwatcher. This is her first visit to Big Bend, so help her out!



Most recent arrivals, **John and Delona Roth** are volunteering for Joe Sirotnak and come to us from Amhurst, Massachusetts. Dr. Roth is a retired Ph.D. Botanist who will be working on rare plant monitoring, revegetation, and exotic plant control. Mrs. Roth will be assisting him in his field work and has agreed to help some in the Interpretive Division also.

Picking up your mail and packages this year!!! There is no “white table” in the PJ hall or “a pile of boxes in Dispatch” this spring when you arrive. Fedex & UPS packages for volunteers can be found in a plastic bin in the Admin house mail room (first house on right on Bobcat Loop). All packages will need to be picked up promptly from the Post Office if they were sent via USPS. If you use General Delivery, you can authorize others from your housing area to pick up mail for you, but the new postmistress, Romney Gonzales, needs a written list of approved mail “picker-uppers.” A phone call will not suffice.

Post office hours: Window is open 8:00-11:30 am and 1:30-3 pm Monday-Friday except for days when there is construction going on in the post office—Sorry for the inconvenience!
Admin house for picking up UPS packages: 8 am-5 pm Monday-Friday.

Just Saw Something Cool? ***Help Get It Into BIBE's Video Archives!***

Thanks to the Friends of Big Bend National Park, BIBE has some great professional-quality high-definition video equipment. But much as she loves the park, VIP videographer Reine Wonite is NOT omniscient. Too many times, she doesn't find out about flowers in bloom, foliage in fall colors, animals hanging out, etc., etc., etc., until waaay after the fact! She needs YOUR help. If you see something cool, try to get a message to her ASAP. First step is to leave a message on her home phone machine (477-2595). Then try contacting her via David (477-2800) and Jane (477-2803).



Next Hiking Club hike set for Friday, March 29!

If you are new to Big Bend, the hiking club is a chance for volunteers (and anyone else who wants to come!) to get together for a reasonable hike, visit with one another and see something that you might not see on your own. These hikes are not Olympic events, but rather moderate exercise with time to “smell the flowers” along the way. We will be taking a radio with us.



The February Hike from Daniels Ranch to the Hot Springs was enjoyable. Hard to believe that cloud cover felt good in February!

The next volunteer hike will be on Friday, March 29th at 8:30 am. It will be a desert hike and take place in the western part of the park. Everyone should meet at the Panther Junction Visitor Center front parking lot at 8:30 am. I would recommend bringing a snack and water. More information on the exact location will follow in an email after Spring Break!

If you are coming from Castolon, meet at the intersection of the Castolon Road and the road to Terlingua (Rt. 13 & Rt. 15) between 8:50 and 9:00 am.

The UMPTEENTH Annual Cookie Chill Off will be held Sunday, March 3, at The Boathouse in [Terlingua Ghost Town](#). This event started “way back when” with river guides showing off their river baking skills. It has now evolved to include guides, restaurant cooks, and our sweet-toothy neighbors. Rules are simple: how would a guide bake while on a trip? No electric, gas, or battery power in your preparations, but pre-made crusts, cookies, and cakes can be incorporated into your recipes. Recipes need to be attached to your entries.

There are four categories: Cookies/Candy, Ice Cream/Sorbet, Pie, and Sugar Free (the sugar free category can be any of the three above.) Judges will pick the best in each category from each division and will award a Best of Show prize. **The People's Choice Award** goes to the contestant who receives the most votes. Registration for each entry is \$5 and for those wanting to vote. \$5 will get you a bowl, a spoon and a ballot! A Petanque tournament and a jam session are also in the works! This event is sponsored by [Last Minute Low Budget Productions](#), a 501(C)(3) organization, with all proceeds going to the **Mercury Performing Arts Center**.

Events in the Area

Sunday, March 3—Terlingua Cookie Chill-Off—See page 5

Wednesday, March 6—VIP Gathering before and after the “Spring Break Meeting” -

There will be a meeting on **March 6** to discuss and gather information to prepare for Spring Break. Time: **1:30 pm in Panther Junction** (either at the Ramada or at 228 Bobcat Loop, will send out an email). All who are interested are invited to attend. Sponsored by the Visitor and Resource Protection Division.

Let's all have **lunch at the Ramada** (big picnic shelter at Panther Junction housing area next to the school) at 12 noon. The school children are having a **Brisket Dinner fundraiser** (Brisket sandwich, chips and lemonade or tea) for a suggested donation of \$5.00.

After the meeting, for those who are interested, we will regroup at Natasha's house on 506 Panther Canyon Dr. for **“afternoon tea”** featuring lots of talking, tea, and I will make a cake!! This is the only VIP “potluck” event for the month of March (except it isn't a potluck because we are eating at the school!).

March 9-17—SPRING BREAK WEEK—Unbelievably, it would appear that all the Texas colleges have the same week off.

March 10—Daylight Saving Time begins

March 11-16 Chihuahuan Desert Research Center 9th Annual Cactus & Succulent Festival at Fort Davis— Events include a native plant sale, 10 am guided hikes into Modesta Canyon, 2 pm “talks at 2” offering special programs on desert related issues, and 2:30 pm guided walks through the botanical gardens.

March 15-17 Open weekend at Davis Mountains Preserve—great chance to visit the Nature Conservancy site between Ft. Davis and McDonald Observatory. This is a lot of fun if you can break away from Big Bend for a weekend. More information at <http://www.nature.org/ourinitiatives/regions/northamerica/unitedstates/texas/events/davis-mountains-preserve.xml> Or call Preserve Manager Shawn Benedict at 432-480-6860 (shawn_benedict@tnc.org)

March 23—The Freebox Fashion Show at the Starlight. Proceeds will go towards purchasing corn and basic staples for the Tarahumara (Raramuri) of Copper Canyon, in partnership with a food bank in Cuauhtemoc, Chih. Mexico. All outfits and models will be arranged the night of the auction. Please bring donations of wonderful used or hand crafted clothing and accessories, clean and in excellent shape. We will need many models of all shapes and sizes, ages, and gender- so show up and try on some fashions for a great cause. For more info call **Kleo at 928-380-3261** or email thelifewife@gmail.com.

Friday, March 29—VIP Hike—Destination to be announced (see page 5)

April 6—5th Annual Green Scene in Terlingua—A celebration of living green Terlingua-style. Held at the Terlingua Ghost town and the Community Garden. Arts, crafts, music, a film festival, food, hands-on-demonstrations, beer garden, and Kid's yard. 11am until...

April 17—VIP Awards Ceremony in the San Vicente School Gym at 6 pm—Mark your calendar!